

The Literary Life

Basil Fawlty*, you irreversible dolt!
Though haven't I spurred white-hot steeds

to just as unremarkable defeats?
(when I had the guts to saddle

anything but hope). Longing to play Hamlet or
Raskolnikov, to be sure. The samovars, the whist-
ling swords! Slums of vile despairing, breathless-

ly sinister courts! Concocting mad scenes to lock
the heart of the moment, but never to flash true
wares as Pangloss, nor dare parade the open face

of Sancho Panza. Saddest yet that narrow shelf
of all my quisling selves.

*Fawlty Towers—British TV